

Essington, PA -- On Sunday, March 25, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-7), a former 3-Star Admiral, attended a ceremony at West End Boat Club honoring Eagle Scout recipient Christopher A. Baer.

At the event, Joe — a former Cub Scout— talked about the importance of service:

“John F. Kennedy said that ‘Efforts and courage are not enough without purpose and direction’,” noted Joe at the ceremony. “Today, Chris has demonstrated that he not only has the courage and the will, but with the help of the Boy Scouts, he also has the purpose and direction to accomplish whatever he sets his mind to.”

Christopher A. Baer, a seventeen year old junior at Ridley High School, has been in the Scouts for most of his life, first joining the scouts as a Tiger Cub at the age of 4. He is the son of Beverly and Robert Baer.

Chris' Eagle Project was to demolish a dilapidated mini-golf course at Camp Innabah in Spring City, PA. He designed and constructed three new holes of concrete, brick, and AstroTurf. Camp Innabah serves Ridley School District fifth-graders each year for a week before they progress to middle school, and many other youth and religious groups. Chris completed the original design, obtained donors for all materials, and led the construction of the three new holes. In addition, Chris has earned 29 merit badges – only 21 are required for Eagle.

Chris' Life project was to help solve the Canadian Geese problem at Ridley Lake in Ridley Park. Chris did some research and found that if he constructed a simple fence around the lake, the geese would find a more convenient place to live and feed and would abandon the lake. Chris obtained donors for some PVC pipe and thousands of feet of mason's line. The line was strung between fence posts of PVC pipe all the way around the lake. Because of his efforts, all but a dozen geese left the lake.

In addition to his scouting activities, Chris plays the trumpet, coronet, electric guitar, and bass guitar. His other hobbies include designing and building various electronics projects.

“Service organizations such as the Boy Scouts produce so many of our future leaders like Chris,” stated Joe at the ceremony. “These community efforts are ones that truly symbolize the principles our country values and are ones that I learned in the Navy: duty, honor, courage.”

According to the Boy Scouts of America, the fact that a boy is an Eagle Scout has always carried with it a special significance, not only in Scouting but also as he enters higher education, business or industry, and community service. The award is a performance-based achievement whose standards have been well-maintained over the years. Not every boy who joins a Boy Scout troop earns the Eagle Scout rank; only about 5 percent of all Boy Scouts do so. This represents more than 1.7 million Boy Scouts who have earned the rank since 1912. Nevertheless, the goals of Scouting—citizenship training, character development, and personal fitness—remain important for all Scouts, whether or not they attain the Eagle Scout rank.

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.*

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